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THE ART MUSEUMS' MONTHLY DIGEST

Art Museum of Chicago
Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences
Buffalo Fine Arts Academy
Cincinnati Museum of Arts
Detroit Museum of Art
John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Toledo Museum
Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts
Worcester Art Museum

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART as an Educational Force was the subject of an article in The Lotus for November, and was a digest of several articles that had appeared in the bulletin of the Museum. The interest with which this article was read lead to the suggestion that The Lotus should regularly give a resumé of the contents of the bulletin. From a discussion of this suggestion there developed the further one that this magazine should devote part of its contents each month to an account, necessarily condensed—a bird's-eye view, as it were—of the activities of the important art museums and other public art institutions of the country. A beginning along this line is made herewith.

The superb portrait of Rodin, which forms the frontispiece of this month's Lotus, was painted in 1910 by Robert MacCameron, and is a gift to the Metropolitan Museum of Art from Mr. Morgan. The Egyptian department of

the Museum also has been enriched by gifts from Mr. Morgan, excavations by the Museum's own expedition, purchases and gifts of the Egyptian Research account, Mr. Maurice Nahman and Mr. Dikran Kelekian.

Mr. Thomas F. Ryan has presented two painted wood statues, Saint John and Virgin, Italian, 1400. Mr. Henry Goldman a portrait of a lady by Ravesteijn; and Mr. Robert Gordon a picture by Sanford R. Gifford and one A. H. Wyant. Messrs. Duveen Brothers have given a French, fifteenth century stained glass window representing St. Christopher. From Messrs. J. & S. Goldschmidt comes the gift of a handsome plate, Western Asia Minor, sixteenth century. Mr. J. Sanford Sallus has presented tape and needle-point lace, Italian, seventeenth century.

The important announcement is made that in addition to the special exhibitions of his drawings which Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan has allowed the

Museum to arrange, and which will begin this month with a series by masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, he has kindly consented to allow us to make at once a temporary exhibition of the paintings which he has had sent over from London, including the great Raphael which has been for a number of years in the National Gallery and the pictures from his London residence. These will be shown in the Gallery of Special Exhibitions, and the exhibition will open early in January.

Of Mr. Ryan's gift "J. B." writes in the bulletin that so few examples of Romanesque and Early Gothic wood carving have survived the mishaps of time that considerable importance is attached to a recent gift of Mr. Thomas F. Ryan of two statues in wood representing the Virgin and S. John Apostle, Italian (?) sculptures of the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, presumably from a Crucifixion group or Deposition. The Virgin Mary stands sorrowfully looking down with her hands folded and pressed against her breast. Over her gown, falling in long, straight folds and girdled at the waist, she wears a loose mantle which is drawn up to cover her head. The youthful S. John, with long hair falling to his shoulders, is dressed in tunic and over-tunic with a pallium crossing his left shoulder. He holds his right hand to his face; his left arm hangs at his side, partly covered by the pallium. The drapery is treated conventionally with the narrow, parallel folds characteristic of Romanesque art. The facial type is the same

in both statues. The nose is large and prominent; the eyes, slightly protruding; the lips, thin; the cheek-bones, high. The eyebrows are contracted, giving to the face an expression of grief.

The statues are a little more than half life-size; the Virgin measures 57 ½ inches in height, the S. John, 55 ½ inches. They were evidently intended to be shown as wall statues, although finished in the back. The feet and circular bases of both figures are new and the tips of the noses have been restored. The figures were completely repainted some fifty or more years ago in light shades of blue, rose and olive, pastel tints which scarcely harmonise with the archaic severity of the forms they mask. Traces of the old polychromy and gilding with the cloth preparation under the gesso may be seen in places where the later paint has chipped away.

In style these sculptures show many close analogies with the Deposition in the Duomo of Volterra, one of the finest examples of wood sculpture dating from the late thirteenth century. The similarity may be noted particularly in the treatment of the drapery and in the facial types. The two statues given by Mr. Ryan are now shown in the Room of Recent Accessions, but at the end of this month will be placed permanently on exhibition in the Wing of Decorative Arts.

A note on three still-life paintings purchased by the Museum is signed "B. B.," who writes that one of these, called "The Green Salon," is by Wal-

ter Gay, the American artist who has made a reputation in Paris as an excellent painter of interiors of old French châteaux, similar to the Museum's picture. This work was shown for the first time last spring in the Exhibition of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, where it was entitled "Boiseries Vertes," and was purchased directly from Mr. Gay. It is a picture of an alcove in the Louis XV style and shows, against green walls paneled with gold mouldings, a commode of the epoch, on which stands a terracotta group of two cupids playing, on either side of which are figurines in faience. It is a view in the artist's own home, the chateau le Bréau, near Melun, Seine-et-Marne.

Another is a large and elaborate composition by Jan Davidsz de Heem. It is a characteristic example of one of those marvelous craftsmen who gloried in assembling all manner of glittering and gorgeous articles in their pictures for the purpose of showing their scorn of difficulties and their skill in overcoming them. In this work there is the usual table piled with gold, silver, and crystal vessels, with a profusion of fruits of various sorts gathered in baskets and on plates, spread over the carefully tucked up tablecloth, and even placed on a nearby chair. The half-peeled lemon which many of these artists delighted in painting is here, near a boiled lobster and a lute, and on a napkin thrown over the table's edge appears the painter's monogram. Rich, heavy curtains are draped for a background and at

the left a column is shown and a strip of dark landscape with a cloudy sky. The items may appear somewhat incongruous, but their delineation is impeccable.

The other picture is by Chardin. It is called "Les Apprêts d'un Déjeuner" and comes from the Doucet Collection sold in Paris last spring. It is listed in the excellent catalogue of Chardin's paintings, compiled by M. Jean Guiffrey, where it is numbered 120. In contrast to the de Heem, the arrangement is of the simplest. On a stone shelf the artist has posed these preparations for a breakfast—a slice of ham on a pewter platter, a wine-bottle, a silver mug full of wine, and part of a loaf of bread with a knife sticking in it. The dark wall at the back is almost lost in the dimness of a room into which the daylight enters but sparingly as though from a courtyard. The picture expresses the serenity and probity of its painter's life. "One stops before a Chardin instinctively," said Diderot, "just as a traveler, weary of his road, rests himself scarcely aware of what he does in a place which offers him a grassy seat, silence, water, shade, and freshness."

A collection of thirty-nine pieces of gold jewelry, Spanish, from the Philippines, seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, and presented to the Museum by its unceasingly generous President, is described by Dr. George F. Kunz, who speaks of the specimens as "attractive and beautiful."

Dr. Kunz writes that the native Filipino possesses, to a certain liberal

degree, the inherent Malay gifts of artistic qualities, good taste, and refinement, which have been here increased by the trace of Spanish blood. This is manifested by the treatment of the various flower, leaf, and fruit forms which have suggested most of the motifs, and which have been conventionalised and elevated in a true artistic spirit and with a deftness of workmanship that would do honour to any European or American goldsmith. We have here a most happy blending of European and Oriental types of design, suggesting in some respects the very best Indian work.

The scapulars are intensely interesting. The coral rose seems to be a favourite design, and the heavy gold wire work is a distinctive feature. The metal work is very intricate, with blue enamel ornamentations, and in the centre is an elongated, diamond-shaped aperture.

The borderings of the medallion pendants are in every case in thorough harmony with the scapular or necklace to which they are attached and we may note in this Filipino work a restraint and sobriety foreign to much Oriental art, although nothing of delicacy or grace has been sacrificed.

The crosses are made of bars of very heavy metal. In these instances the work is somewhat coarse, but the gold has been gradually worn down, giving it a smooth and pleasing appearance.

One rather extraordinary necklace consists of the joining together of elongated discs with a long chain, and the characteristic coral rose emblem.

Another noteworthy piece is a large relic made up of various marquise-shaped plates of gold, which have been

perforated with the designs desired.

Naturally the high prices brought by French sculpture of the eighteenth century at the Doucet sale have caused museums owning such sculpture to consider their display either more prominently than hitherto or in groups if possessing a sufficient number of examples. Thus Houdon's marble bust of Franklin, presented to the Metropolitan Museum of Art as long ago as 1873 by Mr. John Bard, has recently been moved from the main staircase to the south gallery of the Wing of Decorative Arts, where it is now shown, together with the two painted plaster busts of Voltaire and Rousseau, also by Houdon and presented by Mr. Morgan in 1908.

"J. B." writes in the bulletin that the bust of Franklin is life-sized, executed in white marble, signed and dated: *houdon f—1778*. It originally belonged to Dr. Samuel Bard, a physician of New York at the time of the Revolution, and a friend of Franklin. Since this is the only Houdon bust of Franklin in marble that we know, it may well be the bust referred to in the following extract from a letter written in 1802 by Dupont de Nemours from New York, to Thomas Jefferson: "Houdon has left in America a very fine bust of Benjamin Franklin which is now at my house. This bust is in marble, is worth 100 Louis of our money, equaling about 480 dollars. Nothing would be more appropriate than for the nation to place it in your capitol (Va.), and Houdon, to whom Virginia still owes a thousand crowns on the statue of Washington, stands in real need of the money." Nothing came of this proposal, however, and the further

history of the bust is unknown, unless as it has been suggested, the piece was acquired by Dr. Bard.

The bust of Franklin was modeled by Houdon in 1778 and exhibited in terracotta at the Salon of 1779. It will be remembered that Franklin arrived in France toward the close of 1776 to represent this country at the court of Versailles. His great popularity may be appreciated from the number of portraits of all sorts and kinds which were made of him during his sojourn in France. One of the earliest and most important of these was the bust modeled in 1777 by Jean Jacques Caffieri. The Caffieri bust, as Messrs. Hart and Biddle prove conclusively, is the original of the popular type of Franklin portrait, the one showing him with the loose neck-cloth, or jabot hanging down outside his waistcoat. For a century this type of Franklin bust was erroneously attributed to Cerracchi, a sculptor who worked in the United States from 1791 to 1795.

Except for the absence of drapery over the shoulders, the bust of Voltaire is like the Comédie-Française bust known as the one "with the wig," which was modeled in 1778 and was the first step in preparation for the famous statue of Voltaire seated, finished in 1781.

The bust "with the wig" was first shown in plaster, and it was this bust which was crowned with laurel on the stage of the Comédie-Française on the 30th of March, 1778, at the sixth representation of "Irène," after Mme. Vestris had recited the verses by the Marquis of Saint-Marc in honour of Voltaire. This bust was exhibited in marble at the Salon of 1779, together with a statuette of Voltaire and a second bust in the antique manner.

Jean Jacques Rousseau died the 3rd of July, 1778, at Ermenonville. Houdou hastened to take a death mask of Rousseau, from which he worked up the terracotta bust exhibited in the Salon of 1779, catalogued as belonging to the Marquis de Girardin.

A description of the bust of Rousseau exhibited at the Salon in 1779 may well be applied to the bust in the Metropolitan. The passage is taken from the *Mémoires Secrets* of 1779: "What fire in this last portrait, whose piercing glance seems to dive into the innermost recesses of the human heart! From a certain point of view, the illusion is so complete and the glance of the eye so direct and lively, that the bust seems animated, and one feels like avoiding its gaze."

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, has acquired Gainsborough's portrait of John Eld. It was painted about three years before the "Mrs. Graham" and about two years after the "Blue Boy." The bulletin supplies interesting details regarding the subject of the portrait and the picture itself.

John Eld was a liberal, philanthropic gentleman, born in 1704, who took an active interest in the foundation and administration of the Staffordshire General Infirmary, in 1766. We learn from an inscription on the painting "By the Command and the Expense of the Subscribers," that his fine example aroused an admiration which chose to express itself by ordering a full-length, life-size portrait of him

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from the famous painter of the day. Judging from the apparent age of the sitter, and from the technique of the painting, the portrait must have been executed about 1722. John Eld is shown standing, leaning on a column, in front of trees, the leaves of which are beginning to assume their autumn colours. A certain desire for elegance is apparent in his costume; his powdered wig is carefully arranged; his red coat is trimmed with gold braid; lace edges his neck-cloth and his cuffs; he wears rings on his slender, white hands; seals hang at his waist; the gold hilt of his sword is delicately engraved.

For nearly one hundred and forty years this portrait was kept in the Staffordshire General Infirmary, where it was forgotten until in 1910 it appeared at the Burlington House Exhibition. May 10, 1912 the picture was publicly sold in London for the benefit of the Infirmary. It was acquired by a prominent dealer who facilitated its acquisition by the Boston Museum.

The picture is remarkable for the freshness of its colour and the excellence of its preservation; but the suppleness and skill of the execution are especially astonishing; that lightness and variety of touch are apparent, which aroused the jealousy, the admiration and occasionally the ridicule of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was always more labourious and often more dull.

Opportune recent occasions have enabled the Boston Museum to arrange—for the first time—an exhibition of early German and Italian woodcuts, with special, practical, and, therefore, most interesting and valuable reference to their use in book

illustration and ornamentation. Incomplete though it is, as yet, the material now available to the Museum comprises notable publications of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and reveals the great charm inherent in these printed books of text and pictures.

About 1490, as the bulletin points out, was not much more than a generation removed from the beginning of book printing. At that time the publication of illustrated books was still regarded as a recent innovation, greatly scorned by wealthy bibliophiles. A noted Italian humanist of the time exclaimed that he would be ashamed to own a printed book. One may readily appreciate the enormity of the task which confronted those pioneer printers in vying with such excellence; one must realise also, how these very difficulties would spur them on to their utmost efforts, especially at a time when art was at its floodtide both in Italy and Germany. It need not be a source of wonder, therefore to find that the best of these early joint efforts of printer, designer and wood-cut maker remain unexcelled in subsequent centuries.

The exhibition has been skilfully arranged. In order to show the woodcuts in their legitimate setting, the entire page has been exhibited in every instance, showing likewise the printer's arrangement of the pages. Turning to the best Italian example, "*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*," a fantastic book in praise of Antiquity, a more beautiful harmony of text and pictures would be hard indeed to find. The graceful shapes of the fine, clear-cut letters show the same effective sim-

plicity that appears in the sparing, expressive lines of the outline-pictures, drawn and cut with unerring skill.

Attempts in the direction of colour-printing are not lacking by any means, however, as witness the printing, stencilled, and partly hand-coloured cut for a medical treatise. Next to it, in the title-page to the "*Voarchadumia*," is an endeavour to imitate coloured writing by means of successive printing with coloured inks, upon the same page. The title page of a "*Dante*" is a simpler effort in the same direction. The most successful venture in this matter of colour was made along less pretentious lines, namely in the so-called "*chiaroscuro*," which renders the effect of gresaille painting by superposed printing from several blocks, cut one for each tone on the front. Chiaroscuro prints were made but sparingly in Germany, while in Italy, the land of colour, they met with considerable favour.

Lest a mistaken impression should be given that wood-cut was exclusively used for the illustration and decoration of books, a number of wood-cuts meant distinctly as pictures, have been exhibited in both the Italian and German Rooms. In all these prints a distinctive bold treatment of lines and masses can be observed,—a treatment typical of the process, and well recognised by the great sixteenth century exponent of wood-cut, Albrecht Dürer, in whose hands it grew into a wonderful flexible medium of expression. The four great wood-cut series of this master really should all have been duly shown on this occasion; in view of the fact, however, that his prints were shown exclusively in a recent exhibi-

tion in the Boston Museum, limitation seemed wisest, so his "*Little Passion*" only has been exhibited.

It is a large field, as yet but scantily covered, with gap upon gap in both German and Italian material, but these acquisitions of recent date leave room for hope that some of the present deficiencies in the Museum's collection may also be bettered in time.

The series of Syracusan coins shown in a case in the Fifth Century Room of the Boston Museum during the past two years was recently withdrawn, and an exhibition of Greek electrum coins installed in its place. The large majority of these (331 specimens) belong to the well-known Greenwell-Warren Collection, and are now shown for the first time since their acquisition by the Museum. Forty-two coins are from the Catherine Page Perkins collection; other coins were acquired separately. The series include one hundred and seventy-eight coins of Cyzicus, mostly staters, two staters of Lampsacus, seventy-six hectæ of Lesbos, forty-two hectæ and smaller coins of Phocæa, and seventy coins from unidentified Ionian mints. Five gold coins of Lydia, two Persian gold darics, and two gold staters of Philip II of Macedon, have been added by way of illustration.

In the case of some of the earliest electrum coins, it is difficult to determine whether they are Lydian or Greek. In the reign of Croesus, the last of the most famous of the Lydian kings, the use of electrum was given up, and a coinage of pure gold and silver took its place.

The Greeks in Asia Minor continued to strike electrum coins during a

long period, the most famous mint being that of Cyzicus, an important city in Mysia, on the shore of the Sea of Marmora. The Cyzicene staters competed with the darics in Asia, and there is evidence that they had a wide circulation throughout the Greek world down to the time of Alexander the Great. Before this, however, the mint of Cyzicus had ceased to coin them, doubtless owing to the competition of the gold staters issued in great numbers by Philip II, of Macedonia, from the proceeds of the rich gold mines in Thrace.

The Cyzicene staters can be dated approximately on grounds of style, the earliest specimens belonging in the sixth century, while the latest are assigned to the middle of the fourth. The coins, also, show little change in fabric; they remain to the end thick, shapeless lumps of metal. This conservatism, for which coinage of Athens affords a parallel, is to be explained by the wide circulation of the Cyzicenes; it was feared that they would be less readily accepted if their familiar archaic appearance were given up. The coins are uninscribed but are identi-

ed by the tunny fish, the badge of the city, which always appears on the obverse.

The location of Cyzicus in Asia Minor accounts for the numerous representations of oriental monsters half human, half animal, such as the winged male figure with the lion's head and the Harpy. Perhaps the most interesting type in the whole series is the head of an elderly man wearing a laurel wreath, the earliest example of portraiture on a Greek coin. The subject may be the Athenian General Timotheus, son of Conon, though the identification is far from certain.

An inscription found at Mytilene, and dated from about 400 B. C., records a monetary agreement between Lesbos and Phocoe, by the terms of which the two cities were in turn to issue a common coinage in electrum. It was decided that the Lesbians were to begin and magistrates were appointed to try offenders charged with debasing the coinage. The Phocaic sixths closely resemble those of Lesbos, but can be distinguished by the seal (phoca), which was the badge of the city.

THE WORCESTER ART MUSEUM recently acquired a remarkable "Portrait of a Bergamask Captain" belonging to Moroni's best period. Only one other known work of Moroni surpasses it. "The Tailor," in the National Gallery, though scarcely superior in technical qualities of painting, is certainly so by reason of its quiet, human dignity and its depth of characterization. These qualities make it not only unique among Moroni's works but one of the marvels of 16th century portrai-

ture. Yet were "The Bergamask Captain" hung beside "The Tailor," the two paintings would be found to supplement each other so completely that they would embrace practically the whole round of Moroni's genius at its best. For the Captain is formidably revealed, with the twinkling instantaneousness of sudden vision; and he is shown ready for instant action, yet not without a hint of grim humour and of charming camaraderie.

Commenting on a "Head of a Youth-

ful Saint," by Andrea della Robbia, the bulletin of the Worcester Art Museum points out that, as each of the three great della Robbias, Luca, the founder of the school, Andrea, his gifted nephew, and Giovanni, the latter's less able son, maintained a group of assistants in the family atelier, careful analysis is always necessary before a correct attribution can be given to such a work.

An exhaustive consideration of its style and other characteristics indicates that this particular example must, even on a most conservative view, have been executed in great part by Andrea himself and wholly under his supervision. The bulletin quotes, in this connection, the opinion of the best and indeed the only, American authority in such matters. Professor Allan Marquand, of Princeton, in a volume on the della Robbias in America, now in press, writes thus:

"Mrs. Olcott Perkins, of New York, has recently sold to the Worcester Art Museum a round-headed relief showing the bust of a youthful saint, probably San Giovanni Evangelista, San Tomasso or San Ansano. It is broadly modeled and effective, and bears some resemblance to Giovanni's head of San Ansano at the Certosa near Florence. It has, however, more classic dignity, and impresses us more like a prototype than a derivative of the Certosa head. It recalls certain various youthful saints by Andrea della Robbia and may, with good reason, be assigned to his atelier."

Whether Bellini had a share in the painting of a "Madonna and Child" in the Worcester Art Museum and attributed to Rocco Marconi, is discuss-

ed in the bulletin. If, it is argued, the painting seems too beautiful and distinctive to be any known follower or fellow-worker of Bellini, all difficulties are met by a compromised view. What Lionello Venturio, one of the best of the younger historians of Italian paintings, has written concerning the London "Mother and Child" applies even more aptly in this case. Though that painting, he declares, is not equal in its workmanship to Bellini's own, "it is yet," he adds, "too beautiful not to have been executed under his supervision."

In short, we cannot as a matter of scholarly conscience, adopt the too liberal standards of most European galleries by ascribing this painting to the great master. Although we feel that his spirit breathes through it in great part, it is nevertheless substantially a work by Marconi and was probably executed wholly by him. Hence we have elsewhere described this "Madonna and Child" as "executed probably about 1506 by Rocco Marconi, under the direction of Giovanni Bellini and the influence of Giorgione." Nearly all of Marconi's typical works, and some which certainly are not by him, are included in Mr. Berenson's list in his "Venetian Pictures."

The fact that Marconi's Madonna and Child at Strassburg is little known and the relative weakness of his latest work, have caused much perplexity concerning him, so that even so experienced a critic as Sir Claude Philips has doubted whether Marconi really painted the remarkable and popular "Deposition" in the Venice Academy. It is to Mr. Berenson's credit that he was the first critic of reputation to

appreciate justly Marconi's excellence in his early work. See his "Study and Criticism," Vol. I, p. 26. Mr. Berenson's attribution to Marconi of the "Portrait of a Young Man" in the collection of Mr. J. P. Carrington amounted almost to divination and was wholly worthy of the high standards of criticism he had at this time set for himself. The drawing, sentiment and landscape of that delightful period seem to indicate that it is of about the same period as our painting.

Various exhibitions for the seasons are announced by the Worcester Art Museum. An exhibition of great local interest is that of the really important paintings owned in Worcester County, Mass. The authorities of the Museum have found over fifty such works by the older painters. Information concerning the ownership of other pictures, whether by "old masters" or by recent ones of international reputation is sought by the authorities, who believe two exhibitions are possible, the one this year of old masters, and one next year by recent ones.

An exhibition of works by the painters of the Far West, will include such painters as Elliot Dangerfield, Irving Couse, Ben Foster, Albert L. Groll, Gardner Symonds, Frederick Ballard Williams, and others. Exhibition of works by Scandinavian painters, and American painters of Scandinavian descent is another show announced. Citizens of Scandinavian descent form a larger proportion of the population of Worcester than they do in that of any other American city. To stimulate the interest of this important body, the trustees deem it advisable to hold an exhibition of Scandinavian paint-

ings, and paintings of American artists of Scandinavian descent, however remote. News of the owners and location of such paintings is sought by the Director. The "clous" of the exhibition by Scandinavian painters will be ten important works by Fritz Thaulow, already promised by Mrs. Roland C. Lincoln, of Forest Hills, and such paintings of high merit by Zorn as can be procured.

Among the Americans who will probably send examples of their best achievements are Emil Carlsen, Jonas Lie, John C. Johansen, John Carlson and Karl Anderson.

The bulletin of the Worcester Art Museum comments on the "sudden leap of prices upon late works by Inness, Wyant, Martin and Homer, and the beginning of another of paintings by Twachtmann, Blakelock and others. So great are the sums exacted that masterpieces by the men first named can be acquired only by wealthy men and wealthy institutions.

"Our Museum is therefore extremely fortunate in possessing fine examples by most of these painters. Two recent additions have rounded out the list. Inness' 'Pool in the Woods,' a masterpiece in his latest, most imaginative and best vein, supplements our 'Alban Hills,' the finest example but one of the paintings which we know from his modern period, that of the '70's. Wyant's wonderful little 'Summer Day,' is rich in colouring as a Monticelli, as faithful to the real poetry of real nature as a fine Diaz or a Rousseau, and yet as surely American in atmosphere and mood as any of his works, completes the range suggested by our other and larger paintings.

"As these works have not yet arrived in the Museum, a more extended notice of them will probably be published in the next number of the bulletin.

THE BUFFALO FINE ARTS ACADEMY is holding in the Albright Art Gallery a wonderful Textile Exhibition—things from the Mohammedan Exposition at Munich, 1910; stuffs that have been exhibited in Les Arts Decoratifs, Exposition des Tissus Anciens, Rouen; and famous exhibitions in Paris. Miss Sage selected these stuffs while abroad last Fall and arranged for them to be exhibited in Buffalo from November nineteenth through December. Miss Sage glazed the walls six feet up in two of the most important galleries and arranged the textiles in groups as if they were pictures. On the center screen is a cope, Persian Cloth of Gold, which was loaned by Mrs. Chauncey Blair. There are some wonderful Sassanide things belonging to her also, and some very important textiles lent by Henry Golden Dearth. The chief part of the collection was lent by Messrs. Bacri of Paris. There are Coptic things from the time of Christ, and stuffs from all countries.

The advent of this notable collection of textiles to the Albright Art Gallery marks an epoch in the history of its exhibitions. Art leads far into everything; it stretches forth a thousand sensitive tentacles which grasp at beauty everywhere, whether it be the beauty that lies in the sombre splendour of the tapestries of Bayeux, of Italy, of Flanders, or in the woven magnificence of some dead Sultan's palace rug or drapery, or of the work

"An illustration of another recent acquisition, 'The American Girl,' by John Alden Weir, one of our most refined and imaginative painters, appeared in a preceding number of the bulletin."

of silversmiths, goldsmiths, of sculptors in ivory or wood, in the untinted marbles of the immortal masters or of the work of painters long dead. It is revealed to those who love beauty how indissolubly all arts are linked, how closely and eternally knit together in the vast fabric fashioned by man from the beginning of time and in the cryptograms of which lie buried all that man has ever hoped or dreamed.

"Academy Notes," the official organ of the Buffalo institution, from which the above and what follows is adapted, wisely refrains in its preface to the list of exhibits from attempting more than to give a suggestion of the wonderful art of textiles. The oldest stuffs which have come down to us date back to the time of the Sassanides, but even before that China already had spread the cult throughout Asia. It is a strange thing that the rare specimens of stuffs of that period are the legacies of the Christian faith of the Middle Ages, and, if zealous pilgrims had not brought back to Europe the unrivaled stuffs from the Orient, to honour and venerate shrines, nothing would have remained of these splendours.

The selection for the Buffalo exhibition was made with a view to illustrating the most important periods of the history of textile art. This great and comprehensive collection, lent by Messrs. Bacri of Paris, whose position has enabled them from time to time to obtain rare specimens of ancient

textiles of remarkable interest and beauty, dates from the first years of the Christian era up to the eighteenth century, and includes examples of Coptic, Persian, Sassanide, Arabian-Italian, Byzantine, Spanish, Hispano-Arabian, German, Swiss, French, and English stuffs. There are priests' vestments, chasubles, orphreys, copes, altar-cloths, fragments of brocades, velvets, rugs, and draperies.

During the recent visit of Miss Sage to Paris, she met Messrs. Bacri, and succeeded in interesting them in the Albright Art Gallery, with the result that they agreed to lend her this collection. To their group have been added some rare textiles from Mrs. Chauncey Blair of Paris and Chicago, and also from the collection of Mr. Henry Golden Dearth at Montreuil-sur-Mer, France. Such an exhibition of ornamental textiles sheds a new light upon the development of certain artistic fabrics and illustrates the survival and modification of older ornament. The specimens are of peculiar value to the work in a museum and for the study of all art critics and art lovers.

La Fontaine has said that "we can scarcely hope to surpass the ancients who have left us nothing but the glory of following in their footsteps"—a statement which, if true of literature, is even more so of the art of textiles.

Thousands of years before our era the Chinese, Indians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, and Phœnicians wove plain stuffs as fine and delicate as those produced in our modern workshops,

nor were they less skilled in the making of fancy materials. Tombs have delivered up tissues rich in ornament, which were piously wrapped around illustrious dead; monuments show that embroideries of great delicacy and wrought with gold thread were displayed on the robes of persons of distinction.

Textile art is monumental, and has been from time immemorial considered a companion of architecture, sculpture, and painting. The embroidered and brocaded fabrics of ancient and medieval times have contributed mainly to two objects—the drapery of the human form and the decoration of old temples and buildings. Ancient writers are unanimous as to the magnificence displayed by Babylon and Nineveh in the most brilliant branch of textile art. When Herod the Great rebuilt the temple of Jerusalem, nineteen years before our era, he was careful not to omit in the decoration of the sanctuary the marvels of textile art which has been the chief embellishment of the Tabernacle during the long wanderings in the desert. We can readily understand that textile art was early known in all eastern countries, and wherever civilization found a footing.

On examining the condition of textile manufacture in the East at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth centuries of our era, we find it but little altered from the time of the Ptolomies, some six centuries earlier. In 637, the time of the Mohammedan conquest, the capital of the Sessani-

des, overflowed with sumptuous fabrics. The traveler who visited Mecca in 1187 was enraptured by the splendour of the decoration. Great was the part played by superb fabrics in the sacred city, and if we quickly turn our attention to the provinces that extended from India to Spain, we everywhere find painting in textiles equally honoured and beautiful. Our earliest intelligence respecting textile fabrics of old Spain is derived almost exclusively from Moorish sources. Under the Moors the south and the east of Spain grew rapidly famous for the manufacture of all kinds of textile stuffs. To recapitulate very briefly the stages of textile development in Europe, we find that Byzantium comes first with its initiative, having adopted oriental methods of the craft. Sicily and Spain followed with their settlement of Saracens and Moors. The best specimen of Spanish-Arabic textile known is in the Royal Historical Academy in Madrid, Spanish VIIIth century.

After a lapse of time comes Italy, with her absorption and modification of what she gained from Sicilian and Levantine sources, through Lucca, Genoa, Venice, and Florence. Next arises France with Lyons as its chief center, which gives to the remaining European countries a stimulus of which England takes full advantage, running France very closely at times in a race for supremacy.

In the collection lent by the Bacri's are several examples of Coptic work or textiles of the first years of the

Christian era. These are rare specimens and were included in the exhibition of Mohammedan art, Munich, 1910. Of the Persian textile examples, probably the rarest is a panel of velvet with figure of a woman holding a bowl. This is of the fourteenth century and was not only included in the catalogue of Munich, but was illustrated in the same; is described and illustrated in Dr. F. R. Martin's book, and was in *Les Arts Decoratifs*, Paris. Other Persian things number seventeen items.

In Arabians is a fragment of a flag with inscription similiar to that on the tomb of Ras-Lan at Constantinople, fifteenth century; and a fragment of stuff with an animal, rampant, fourteenth century. There is a Byzantine fragment representing two figures of Christ. Among the forty-three Italian pieces is a velvet made in Venice for the East; in the design, sequins of the Doges of Venice and the ornaments of the family of the Tatamistes, sixteenth century. Exhibited at Exposition of Mohammedan Art, Munich, 1910, and Exposition *Les Arts Decoratifs*, Paris. Also a panel of polychrome velvet with design of flowers, vases and peacocks, Louis XVI; and a dalmatic of cut Gothic velvet, fifteenth century. On this Dalmatic are embroidered squares of silk and linen, of the fifteenth century and representing saints and scenes from the life of Christ, the Nativity, etc. This type of weaving is generally thought to be of the Sienese school. From the de Somzee collection, Brussels. Exhibited at

the Exposition of Mohammedan Art, Munich, 1910, and at the Exposition l'Histoire du Costume, Paris.

A Spanish cope of cut velvet in two divisions, one Renaissance with branches and leaves, across the top a band of embroidery of the sixteenth century with panels of saints under arches, was exhibited at the Exposition des Tissus Anciens, Rouen, and Exposition at l'Histoire du Costume, and les Arts Decoratifs, Paris. The front of chasuble, yellow brocade background, period fifteenth century, has in the middle an orphrey with two figures, period sixteenth century. There are Hispano-Arabian fragments and a Hispano-Saracenic one with inscription, a piece of silk woven in parallel bands, alternately decorated with repetitions of the Arabic inscription "Glory to our Lord the Sultan," in yellow on a red ground. These bands are separate from one another by narrow borders of interlaced ornament in red on white ground; fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. This rare specimen is illustrated in Alan Cole's book "Ornamental European Silks." It is also illustrated in the catalogue of Mohammedan Art. Hispano-Flemish pieces include embroidered orphreys with Apostles under arches; and a chasuble with design of the crown of the Doges of Venice; in the middle is an embroidered orphrey with saints in relief on a gold ground. Flemish is a panel of green velvet, "Cloth of Honor," fifteenth century. Such velvet may be seen in the pictures of the Flemish and Dutch masters of the fif-

teenth century. Of Belgian origin is a manipole, at each end embroidery of the fourteenth century. There are eight Sicilian fragments.

In the German section may be found the front of a chasuble, twelfth century; woven background is Siculo-Arabian period and represents squares with animals. In the middle of the chasuble is an embroidered orphrey with figures of saints in silk on a silver ground. This orphrey is German of the twelfth or thirteenth century. There is a rare fragment of silver brocade with eagles, Sicilian, end of thirteenth century. A large cope of red and gold brocade "Cloth of Honor," of the same design as is seen in the pictures of the masters of the fifteenth century; across the top an orphrey of silk embroidery in relief, of the same period, with saints in niches. This embroidery has on it the coat-of-arms of the city of Mannheim and belonged to the Cathedral of that city. A chasuble of German form with Siculo-Arabian weave has a design of animals brocaded in silver with inscriptions. From a North German Church.

A Swiss altar front embroidered on linen represents scenes from the lives of the Evangelists and their symbols, which are respectively, angel, lion, ox, and eagle; end of the fourteenth century. A similar but smaller specimen is in the museum of Berne. This is a rare textile found in a church of Coire, Switzerland. The French items include a panel, book design of the "partridge" type by Philippe de La-salle, a celebrated designer of Lyons,

eighteenth century. A similar design is in the Museum of Lyons, and this was exhibited at the Exposition des Tissus Anciens, Rouen. An orphrey made from five pieces of embroidery, with numerous figures, chain and stitch, fifteenth century, is English work of the finest quality.

In the seventeen unusual specimens of textile art loaned by Mrs. Chauncey Blair is a most precious piece—a fragment of stuff like that in the Church of St. Sabin at Maestricht. In the center of a medallion decorated with simple foliage, on a background of old red,

is represented an exactly symmetrical picture; the middle is occupied by a double statue standing on an altar; on each side below is a kneeling figure holding fast a bull vowed to sacrifice; above on either side a winged genius. The design is summary, the faces grinning but the arrangement as well as the style of the details, not less than the subject, make us recognise in this fragment an incontestable type of oriental art of the epoch of the latter Sassanides, toward the sixth or seventh century.



RODIN, by R. MacCameron
Gift of Mr. Morgan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art